

Remarks for the Honorable Doris O. Matsui  
**Floor Consideration of H.R. 1076**  
Thursday, March 17, 2011

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Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition of H.R. 1076, which would prohibit public radio stations from using federal funds to acquire *any* radio programming from *any* source.

This bill is in many ways a red herring disguised as a spending cut.

For starters, the entire Corporation for Public Broadcasting receives around .0001% of the annual federal budget.

Eliminating all of that funding would save Americans less than half a cent a day. And eliminating just the programming piece, as this bill requires, would “save” us even less money while eliminating a valuable educational, cultural, and community resource.

As a former board chair of my district’s local PBS TV station, I can attest to the value that public broadcasting programming offers to my constituents.

I hear from families, seniors, and everyday commuters who use public broadcasting to get local news -- to learn something new about the world -- and teachers who use its educational programming in their classrooms.

Public channels are also necessary to facilitate communication, including in emergency situations.

Recently, I heard from a constituent of mine who expressed his sorrow to me at the prospect of losing public broadcasting services.

As he put it, he pays less than two dollars a *year* in taxes for the service, but he learns something new every day as he listens to public radio on his way to work.

It makes him a more informed, more engaged citizen.

To him, it was a simple equation of value for money.

It is also about jobs. Public TV and radio stations employ over 17,000 people across the country.

This bill would endanger 9,000 of those. Mr. Speaker, these are jobs that no one can afford to lose.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to address some of the myths about federal funding for NPR.

Only two percent of National Public Radio funding is directly provided by the federal government.

NPR is a public-private membership media organization that syndicates programming for hundreds of public radio stations across the country.

Individual member stations, such as local university stations, are required to be non-commercial and educational in nature, and are not required to broadcast all NPR programming.

In fact, decisions to purchase and air these programs are based on market factors in *local* communities, by *local* staff.

In closing, I urge my colleagues to against this harmful legislation and to uphold the legacy of American public broadcasting.